

COUNTRY	Germany (Soviet Zone)	CLASSIFICATION	CONFIDENTIAL
TOPIC	Military Information from the Dessau Training Area	25X1	
EVALUATION	25X1	PLACE OBTAINED	25X1
DATE OF CONTENT		25X1	
DATE OBTAINED	25X1	DATE PREPARED	21 November 1951
REFERENCES		25X1	
PAGES	2	ENCLOSURES (NO. & TYPE)	
REMARKS	<p>REFERENCE COPY</p> <p>DO NOT CIRCULATE</p>		

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1.

troop tank and AT artillery units started bivouacking in the Zerbst-Barby-Aken-Dessau area on 25 October 1951. The streets in Rossau leading toward Zerbst were marked by an arrow with a red ball in the center of its shaft. The tank units, which had concentrated north of the Elbe River, were attacked by formations of up to 40 ground attack aircraft and by formations of light bombers from south of the Elbe River. The attacking aircraft were fired at by AA guns of all calibers. Following intensive artillery preparation, the troops assembled in the area north of the Elbe River, and crossed the stream on 26 October. The first troops who crossed to the south bank of the river on floats and ferries, which were widely scattered between Dessau and Aken, were combat engineers and advance detachments. The main body of the troops crossed a pontoon bridge at Rietzrock the same night. There was a great deal of combat activity at the bridgehead established on the southern river bank on 27 October, but the troops withdrew across the river that same night. Source concluded that the maneuver had ended by the afternoon of 28 October, because the Rossau-Magdeburg road was reopened to civilian traffic at that time. Continual shuttle traffic of tank trucks between the maneuver site and the dump at Aken was observed throughout the period of the maneuver. The troops started departing from the area on 29 October. *

2. On 27 and 28 October, tanks and heavy weapons crossed the Elbe River at Steckby, Steuz and Rietzmeck and advanced as far as Lindau. Source observed the detraining of about 80 tanks in Lindau.

Vehicles observed in the Lindau area included: armored reconnaissance cars; 2 armored personnel carriers; and trucks

* Comment. The information only supplements previous reports on the river-crossing exercise in the Elbe River sector between Dessau and Barby from 21 to 22 October 1951, which involved the XXIX Sds Itz Rifle Corps

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reinforced by the two engineer regiments of the GCFG and components of the 6th Arty Div, the 7th Gds Tank Div and the 14th Gds Recz Div. []

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[] The present report again indicates that the maneuver consisted of an attack across the Elbe River from north to south, the establishment of a bridgehead on the south bank of the river, and combat for, and withdrawal from, the bridgehead under the pressure of a superior opposing force attacking from the south. []

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[] Comment. Since the vehicles observed belong to components of those units specified in the field comment above, it is believed that [] observed the withdrawing movement of the reinforced XXIX Gds Mtz Rifle Corps to the north as far as the Lindau area. If 30 tanks were actually detained in Lindau as late as one day prior to the end of the maneuver, they may have belonged to components of the 7th Gds Tank Div, which either returned to their Dessau-Rosslau post from Letzing Heath, or upon completion of the field exercises observed in the Burg area on 25 October. Or they may have been reinforcements for the troops engaged in the maneuver on the Elbe River. The available reports do not indicate that the southern force which, consisting of components of the XXVIII Gds Mtz Rifle Corps and assembled in the area east of Herseburg since 25 October, attacked the bridgehead of the XXIX Gds Mtz Rifle Corps. However, it is fairly definitely believed that components of this southern force either participated in the maneuver of the northern force or constituted the opposing side attacking the bridgehead from the south. []

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